

## UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the

Western District of Texas**FILED**February 15, 2022  
CLERK, U.S. DISTRICT COURT  
WESTERN DISTRICT OF TEXASBY: Susan Williams  
DEPUTY

United States of America

v.

Case No. **PE:22-M-00138**

HECTOR FLORES, JR.

*Defendant(s)***CRIMINAL COMPLAINT**

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of 01/28/2022 through 2/14/2022 in the county of Brewster in the  
Western District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:*Code Section**Offense Description*18 U.S.C. 13, assimilating  
Texas Penal Code 22.041(c)Laws of States adopted for areas within Federal jurisdiction;  
Child Endangerment

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See attached Affidavit

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.*Complainant's signature*

Alice D. Downie, Special Agent

*Printed name and title*

- ☐ Sworn to before me and signed in my presence.  
☒ Sworn to telephonically and signed electronically.

Date: 02/15/2022City and state: Alpine, Texas*Judge's signature*

David B. Fannin, United States Magistrate Judge

*Printed name and title*

On February 5, 2022, Big Bend National Park Rangers found what appeared to be an abandoned vehicle in the vicinity of 29.385380, -103.070157. The vehicle, a 2005 blue Dodge Ram 1500 with Texas license plate JDG9486, was located in a wash about a quarter mile off of Old Ore Road in a very remote part of the National Park, near Roy's Peak. This location is approximately 20 miles from the border with Mexico. The driver's door was ajar, and the windows were open. The occupants were not present.

Personal belongings were found in the vehicle, to include a wallet containing a Nevada identification card number 2101750891 for Hector Flores, Jr. (FLORES). There were Social Security Administration cards and birth certificates for FLORES and L.F. also in the vehicle, as well as a legal document showing FLORES was nine-year-old L.F.'s biological father. A records check showed FLORES was the registered owner of the 2005 Dodge Ram 1500.

On or about February 5, 2022, Park Rangers and U.S. Border Patrol personnel began to search the area on foot for FLORES and L.F. When they were not found in the vicinity, a systematic ground search and air search was initiated.

During the systematic ground search, search personnel located numerous personal items strewn about within a few hundred yards of the vehicle, farther down the wash. These items included adult and child clothing, children's backpacks, toiletries for an adult and a child, and children's toys. Locks of hair six inches long, which appeared to have been cut, were also found along with human waste. A small animal cage was discarded in the wash. Border Patrol Agents on scene assessed that these items were not consistent with those typically left behind by undocumented immigrants who transited the area. Subsequent investigations revealed L.F. to have had hair matching that which was found, and that she had a pet rat. Footprints the size of FLORES's and L.F.'s shoes were found leading out into the desert.

Investigations revealed that FLORES and L.F. moved to Fort Stockton, Texas two years ago. On or around January 4, 2022, FLORES withdrew L.F. from school and did not enroll her in a new school.

On or around January 26, 2022, the telephone number used by FLORES and L.F., was disconnected due to non-payment.

On or around January 27, 2022, FLORES called his place of employment in Fort Stockton and advised that he was not going to show up for his shift that day. FLORES subsequently did not show up for work and was fired that day.

On or around January 28, 2022, a camera recorded FLORES's 2005 Dodge Ram 1500 entering Big Bend National Park at the Persimmon Gap entrance.

The temperatures in Big Bend National Park between January 28, 2022, and February 13, 2022, reached lows down to 10 degrees Fahrenheit. The area also experienced heavy rain during this period. The area of Big Bend National Park where FLORES's vehicle was found offers no food, water, or shelter. The terrain is rugged with mountains, jagged rocks, and cactus. Based on my training and experience, I know this area is a route used by undocumented immigrants to enter the United States illegally.

On February 13, 2022, Flores and L.F. were observed from the Hot Springs area in Big Bend National Park. Flores and L.F. were observed on the Mexican side of the Rio Grande River. On February 14, 2022, Mexican authorities located Flores and L.F. near the Rio Grande River in Mexico and conducted a welfare check. After discovering that Flores and L.F. did not have proper documentation to remain in Mexico, authorities took Flores and L.F. into custody. L.F. was subsequently deported back to the United States from Mexico and turned over to the custody of the U.S. National Park Service so that L.F. could be transported to the custody of Child Protective Services. While Park Rangers were traveling from the

Boquillas del Carmen Port of Entry to the Persimmon Gap Visitor's Center where CPS would be waiting, L.F. freely stated to Park Rangers that they ran out of food, and she had not eaten in four days. L.F. further stated, "Thank God we came across some kayakers, and they gave us wraps to eat."

Based on the evidence described above, I believe probable cause exists that from on or about January 28, 2022 through February 14, 2022, in the Western District of Texas and elsewhere, that HECTOR FLORES, JR. intentionally, knowingly, recklessly, or with criminal negligence, by act or omission, engaged in conduct that placed a child younger than 15 years in imminent danger of death, bodily injury, or physical or mental impairment while in Big Bend National Park, a Federal jurisdiction, in violation of 18 U.S.C. §13, assimilating Texas Penal Code § 20.041(c), child endangerment.